

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/031,973

Examiner

Quang D. Thanh

Applicant(s)

TAKAMURA, SHIGEO

Art Unit

3764

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to an amendment filed on 6/4/2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-18.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on _____ are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1-18 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art of record fails to teach or render obvious a unit-type roller drive device of a size to fit within a back rest portion of a chair with protruding massaging ball rollers for engaging the back of a user's body, said chair back being separate from an associated chair seat, comprising: a frame having left and right sides extending longitudinally between upper and lower ends and a frame thickness, a base portion, left and right edge portions standing upright from the left and right sides of the base portion to bound a space corresponding with said frame thickness between said upper and lower ends; a longitudinal guide slit provided in each of the left and right edge portions; upper and lower shafts each having a gear respectively mounted to the upper and lower ends of the frame; left and right roller chains respectively mounted on each side of said frame in a ring shape around the upper and lower shafts and meshing with said gears; a shaft bushing mounted to each roller chain and carrying said massaging ball rollers, the left and right ends of said shaft bushings including guide rollers mounted in said guide slits for guided movement along the slits; and in combination with all the elements and further including a drive motor mounted to said frame operably connected to said gears to move said roller chains and massaging ball rollers between said upper and lower ends of said frame; wherein said guide slits and said roller chains are substantially aligned within the thickness of said frame when viewed in longitudinal section, and said

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gears, roller chains and drive motor are contained within said space corresponding with said frame thickness to provide a compact device that may be incorporated in a chair back with said massaging ball rollers extending beyond said space corresponding with said frame thickness to engage said user's back. More specifically, prior art of record fails to disclose the limitation "a longitudinal guide slit provided in each of the left and right edge portions" and the inclusion of "said guide slits and said roller chains are substantially aligned within the thickness of said frame when viewed in longitudinal section, and said gears, roller chains and drive motor are contained within said space corresponding with said frame thickness to provide a compact device".

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Quang D. Thanh whose telephone number is (703) 605-4354. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday & alternate Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nick Lucchesi can be reached on (703) 308-2698. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306 for regular and After-Final communications.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Quang D. Thanh
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3764
September 24, 2004

QT



NICHOLAS D. LUCCHESI
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